

THE WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

Socialism, Internationalism, Votes for All.

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WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS: By G. D. H. Cole

In view of the coming passage into law of the Representation of the People Bill, the prophets are busy forecasting the way the women will vote. Women's organisations on all sides are preparing for a campaign of political education and propaganda, and all of them are proclaiming very loudly that the women of this country will vote their way. I confess that I do not know, and that I do not think any one can know, which way women will vote; but of this I am sure—they will find that their political power is subject to the same laws as have governed masculine politics in the past.

What are these laws? The first and clearest of them is that the effective use of political power depends on the possession of economic power. The male section of Labour has only won its triumphs and averted its defeats because it has had behind it the organised strength of the Trade Union Movement. The series of articles in *The Times* a week or so ago on the 'Ferment of Revolution' showed clearly that the governing class is only afraid of Labour when Labour is strongly organised on economic lines.

If, then, women are to make their newly won political power a substance rather than a shadow, they must follow the example of some of the men, and organise strongly on economic lines. Housewives must join themselves together in a great organisation of consumers, and, above all, wage-earning women must unite in strong Trade Unions.

Here, however, arises a wider problem. Women want economic and political power; but they want it, not against the men, but in conjunction with the men. As wage-earners, women have indeed distinctive interests for which they must find special means of expression, but their interests are few and unimportant in comparison with the great solidarity which binds together both sexes in the fraternity of toil. Women must organise on economic lines; but they must organise not

against the men, but with them. Otherwise, a labour war between the sexes will afford to the employers their best opportunity of forcing down wages and establishing more firmly than ever the regime of exploitation.

Men and women in industry have little interests that diverge; but they have a great interest that is common to them all. Both industrially and politically, Labour must build up an organisation in which men and women can play an equal part, and find an equal expression for their point of view and their outlook on life. Politically, this involves a recasting of the Labour Party on a broader basis of organisation, and there are signs that this work of re-creation is being taken seriously in hand. Industrially, what is wanted is a new Trade Unionism, free from the old sex prejudices, and based firmly on the principle of a common

The old Unions must open their ranks to women, and must sweep away all barriers that rest solely upon sex. At the same time, men and women must fight side by side to establish the principle of equal rates of pay for both sexes, and must not allow, on any pretext advanced by a false kind of feminism, reductions in the rates of pay which will in the long run damage men and women alike. Some women now, in fear of unemployment after the war, are crying out that women must be retained in industry after the war, even at the cost of lower rates of pay than those received by men. Needless to say, such "feminists" do not belong to the working class. The working woman knows well that an injury to one is an injury to all, and that a fall in men's rates means penury for countless wives and children.

The Craft Unions are to blame because they have not frankly faced the problem of women's labour, and worked out as between men and women, and skilled and unskilled, a common policy for the period after the war. Sooner or later they

will have to do this; and the sooner the better. Otherwise both parties may find themselves plunged into a sex conflict which neither desires, and which can only redound to the benefit of the capitalist class.

With demobilisation will come the real difficulty. Women will be discharged from war work, and big efforts will be made to re-employ them at starvation rates. The women will be forced in many cases by economic pressure to take what they can get; the men Trade Unionists will resist their employment at less than established rates; and unless we have laid our plans beforehand, the sex conflict will be in full swing.

What, then, are the remedies? They can be simply stated. First, the efforts to organise women in Trade Unions must be redoubled, and there must be far more backing for them from men Trade Unionists in the shops. Secondly, there must be a real attempt on the part of the leaders of the Craft Unions, the general labour Unions, and the Women's Unions, both national and locally, to reach a common agreement on a national war policy. Thirdly, the Government must be compelled, by pressure from the whole of organised Labour, to make such provision for discharged war workers after the war as will effectively prevent any woman from being forced to blackleg on her fellows by taking a job at less than the standard rate. All these things can be secured if Labour wants them. It is for women now to organise, and to see that Labour takes the necessary steps.

Of Special Interest This Week!

THE HOUSE AND THE HOUSEWIFE by E. Sylvia Pankhurst

WHAT HAPPENED TO LAST WEEK'S DREADNOUGHT

WAR AND THE SCHOOLS.

THE Annual Report of the Chief Medical Inspector to the Board of Education presents to us the spectacle of devoted scientists and educationalists finding their efforts to cope with the problem of child nurture and training arrested at every turn by evil social conditions and official economies, which are in reality not economies but gross extravagances, because they are wasteful of child energy, the most precious national asset.

MEDICAL INSPECTION.

Sir George Newman, in his Report, lays down as an irreducible minimum various requirements. Let us see how these are met. The first is:— "That every child shall periodically come under direct medical and dental supervision, and if found defective shall be followed up."

Sir George Newman told the nation a year ago that on a moderate computation, not less than a million children of school age were so physically or mentally defective or diseased as to be "unable to derive reasonable benefit from the education which the State provides." Since 1915 the system of inspection which Sir George Newman lays down as the irreducible minimum has been largely abandoned, and the inspection of all elementary school children coming within the three age groups prescribed by the Code, has been replaced by the inspection of ailing children. School medical officers, assistant medical officers, and nurses have been called to the war, consequently the children have had to suffer! In normal times elementary school children are examined when first admitted to the school and between the ages of 8 and 9 and 12 and 13, but in the secondary schools they are examined annually. Such a distinction is discreditably snobbish and shortsighted. Because of the war the secondary school children are examined biennially. The normal proportion of elementary school children medically examined is small: upwards of 2,000,000. In 1915-16 it had fallen to 1,446,448 out of 5,306,411.

MALNUTRITION AND SCHOOL FEEDING.

Sir George Newman's second stipulation is:— "That every child found mal-nourished shall, somehow or other, be nourished, and every child found verminous shall, somehow or other, be cleansed."

But Sir George Newman tells us that though 10 per cent (about 600,000) of the children are so ill-nourished as to be unable to derive benefit from school attendance, nevertheless, in the year 1916-17, only 63,939 received meals at school. This is a striking revelation of the cheeseparing way in which school feeding is carried on. The number of children fed at school during the last five years was as follows:—

Year	1912-13	1913-14	1914-15	1915-1916	1916-17
Number	358,306	156,531	422,401	117,901	63,939

Why are the numbers so small, since poverty and want are so extensive? Why have the numbers decreased? The numbers are undoubtedly kept down by the attitude of members of the Local Education Authorities and Care Committees, who grant the meals in a grudging spirit and cause the parents to feel humiliated by accepting them. Moreover, bills are often sent to the parents demanding payment for meals which were granted as free. Therefore, school feeding is disliked by most of the parents and only resorted to in times of extreme want. At the outbreak of war every one was talking of schemes for relieving unemployment and, though no great generosity was displayed towards those who were in need, the prevailing fear of "undermining parental responsibility and of encouraging the work-shy was somewhat allayed. Therefore, for the time being school meals were granted more readily than usual. But now it is the fashion to say that the working classes are doing well, that wages are high, and every one who wishes to be so is fully employed. School feeding has therefore decreased to its lowest ebb, though 600,000 school children are partially starved.

The following table showing the relative condition as to nutrition in Lewisham, a middle-class suburb, and in Bethnal Green, a typical industrial tenement district, shows clearly how poverty affects the child:—

	Younger Boys.			Younger Girls.		
	Good.	Fair.	Poor.	Good.	Fair.	Poor.
Lewisham ..	67.1	30.0	2.9	67.6	29.8	2.6
Bethnal Green ..	9.0	58.0	32.6	8.0	72.2	19.8

	Older Boys.			Older Girls.		
	Good.	Fair.	Poor.	Good.	Fair.	Poor.
Lewisham ..	73.3	24.2	2.5	73.3	23.7	3.0
Bethnal Green ..	7.9	66.7	25.5	11.7	69.9	18.4

SCABIES.

Every child must be cleansed, says Sir George Newman, but he reports that 10 per cent of the school children throughout the country are so lacking in cleanliness that they cannot derive full benefit from their schooling, and that in London 25 per cent of the children were reported as unclean in 1916. There has been a great increase of scabies amongst the children who have been infected with this dirt disease by soldiers returning from the trenches. Dr. Hamer reports that in London 2,154 children were dealt with for scabies at the cleansing station in 1915-16, and 3,213 in 1916-17. There is a shortage of accommodation at the baths, and these are too far away for children from some districts, so that the length of absence from school due to scabies is 9.7 weeks. Dr. Fosbroke of Worcester, to the to see the disease cured more rapidly, so lost that parents should be prosecuted if the child lasts more than a month. We think that the who caused scabies to be brought to the horn and those who have failed to provide proper means of treatment, should be punished rather than the parents.

EYE STRAIN.

Sir George Newman also urges:— "That the school environment and the means of education shall be such as can in no case exert any favourable or injurious influences upon the health, growth, and development of the child." This would seem hardly to need saying, but the Report shows that at least in regard to the children's eye-sight, the school arrangements are highly injurious in many cases:— "The great majority of children enter the school with normal vision, but owing in large measure to the defective conditions under which instruction is given that number is seriously diminished in the course of a few years. School medical officers frequently refer to two of the causes, that of the lighting of the schoolroom and the near distance of the blackboard."

(Continued on page 865 col. 1.)

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SOCIALIST SUNDAY SCHOOL: 20 Railway Street, Poplar. Sunday Afternoons, 3 P.M.

FEDERATION NOTES

BIG PUSH.

On Saturday, October 6th, a very successful Peace Meeting was held in Victoria Road, Mrs. Walker, the principal speaker, spoke upon the Pope's Move for Peace. She pointed out that he alone of all the great church leaders in Europe was following in the footsteps of Christ, the Prince of Peace. She urged all Socialists as well as all Christians to give him their support. An Australian soldier, who continually interrupted, was removed from the crowd by other soldiers. All the *Dreadnoughts* of the last issue published were sold out. A good number of Big Push leaflets was also sold, and a collection was taken for the General work of the Federation.

PEACE PICKETS.

On Sunday afternoon, members of the Federation and friends picketed with Peace banners outside Westminster Abbey. The new banner, "Support the Pope's Move for Peace," attracted a great deal of attention. The banner, "Negotiate for Peace on the Russian Terms, no Annexations, no Indemnities," was commented upon by a little party of French people; who said, "the Germans are our enemies, but the Russians have betrayed us, they would make peace before we are prepared." They were reminded that it is not only the Russian people who are crying out for peace, it is demanded by great masses of the people in every European country. While the picket was in progress bodies of cadets were being drilled in front of the House of Commons. More sympathy was shown towards us on this occasion than at any previous time.

BRANCHES.

Meetings are held every Monday evening at 400, Old Ford Road, at 8 P.M. A very interesting series of lectures has been arranged, and we hope that members will make them known as widely as possible. Bow members are urged to attend in good time, as it is proposed to discuss Bow Branch business at the commencement of the meetings. Miss Tollmache will be present to receive subscriptions.

The Thursday evening At Homes have been transferred from the Emerson Club to 29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. Copies of the Postcard Syllabus may be obtained from this Office. We wish members to use these as postcards in corresponding with friends. There will be an At Home to-day (Saturday, 13th) at 42, Forest Lane, Stratford. It is being arranged by the Leyton branch, so that members and friends may have an opportunity of meeting Miss Pankhurst. It is hoped that the children from the Bow dancing class will give an entertainment.

OUR FUNDS.

Donations to be sent to the Hon. Financial Secretary, Miss N. L. Smyth, 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3. All parcels to 400 Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3.

GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGED.

GENERAL FUND.—W. J. Woods, Esq., £2; Irene, per Mrs. Drake (20s. weekly), £2; Mrs. Drake, 10s.; Miss Florence McDonald (Peace), 1s. COLLECTIONS: Miss Beamish, £1 0s. 5d.; Mrs. Walker, 19s.; Waterloo Road, 2s. 3d. "DREADNOUGHT" FUND.—Harrison Barrow, Esq., £5; Birmingham Branch W.S.F., Indictor, £1 10s.; Mr. Israel Zangwill, £1 1s.; Mrs. Beckett (Card), £1; Miss Tollmache, £1; Mrs. Jockelman (Card), £1; Miss R. Barker, 10s. 6d.; Miss Gore Brown (Card), 10s.; A Friend in Leicester, 10s.; Mrs. Drake (Card), 7s. 6d.; St. Pancras Branch W.S.F. (weekly), 5s.; Mr. J. E. Phillips, 5s.; Mrs. Boswell, £1; John Wood, Esq., 3s.; Mr. E. J. Bowen, 1s. 6d.; Miss Isaacs, 3d. DREADNOUGHT GUARANTEE FUND.—Previously acknowledged, £2 11s. 3d. Mrs. Pearson (weekly), 1s.; Miss V. E. Chan (weekly), 1s. MILK AND GENERAL DISTRESS.—Mrs. Manuel, £10; Miss Grainger Kerr, £8 10s.; Miss Esther A. Matthews (Montessori), £5; Mrs. Baillie Weaver (monthly), £2; Mrs. Boswell, £2; Miss M. Gibson, £1 5s.; J. Castelli, Esq., £1 1s.; Miss Mary Law, £1 1s.; Mrs. Mary Helen Moller, £1 1s.; Contessa Tomasi Isolani (monthly), £1; Mrs. Mary Taylor, 10s.; Miss Lettie Usherwood, 10s.; Nurse Hebbes (weekly), 10s.; Miss Grace Hyde (Montessori) (fortnightly), 10s.; Miss Grace Hyde (Montessori), 6s.; Misses Barrowman (monthly), 5s.; Miss E. Crabb (monthly), 3s. 6d.; D. Wilkie, Esq. (monthly), 2s. 6d. COLLECTIONS: L.S.A. Toolroom, £1 9s. 2d.; Miss Fox, 12s. 11d.; Misses K. Langsding and Mrs. Bertram (Cubitt Town), 5s. 9d.; Miss Barker (Greens Yard), 5s.; Mrs. Ferne, 5s.; Miss E. H. Stevens (farthings), 2s.; Churn, 1s. 2d. Par.

FRIENDS are asked to send some strong wooden toys for the children at the Mothers' Arms.

LEEDS

LEEDS.—Hon. Sec.: Mrs. Hunter, 7 Sugdenfold, Armley. Branch meeting, Clarion Café, Tuesdays, 8 p.m. DREADNOUGHTS sold, 104.

On Monday, Miss Pankhurst is speaking for the Holloway Branch of the W.S.F. at the Co-operative Hall, Seven Sisters Road, N. We hope that all members and friends in the district will make a point of attending. Mr. Cave, 31, Blackstock Road, Finsbury Park, N., is the Secretary.

OLD COCKNEY FAIR.

The first meeting of the Christmas Exhibition Committee will be held on Monday, October 15th, at 5 P.M., at 29b, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C. All members of the National Committee and Branch Secretaries are invited to attend. The programme will be drawn up and details discussed. We must appeal to our friends to support us very generously in order that it may be an unqualified success.

LEICESTER

ADULT SUFFRAGE CONFERENCE.

On Saturday, October 6th, a Conference, convened by the Workers' National Adult Suffrage Movement, was held in the Co-operative Union Hall to discuss Adult Suffrage and the Abolition of the House of Lords. Delegates from a number of Trade Unions, Socialist and Women's Societies attended, and were addressed by Mrs. Bouvier (W.S.F.), Mr. W. Carter (N.U.R.), presiding. After an animated discussion, the following resolutions were carried:

1. That this Conference declares that the present Government Franchise measure is unsatisfactory, and that no franchise measure will be acceptable to the workers, unless it extends the franchise to every man and woman of 21, and completely abolishes all property and other forms of plural voting, and also abolishes the property disqualification.
2. This Conference decides that an Adult Suffrage Council shall be formed in Leicester to be affiliated to the Workers' National Adult Suffrage Movement. This Council to be formed of delegates from Labour, Socialist, and Adult Suffrage bodies, such delegates to form the General Council, and the executive committee to be elected by them.
3. This Conference decides that a provisional committee be elected to serve for 6 months; that this committee appoint its own officers, and that it shall be affiliated to the Workers' National Adult Suffrage Movement, was formed; the following being elected to the Provisional Committee: Secretary, Mrs. Radford (Trades Council); 82, Woodhill; Mr. Baum (Secretary, Trades Council); Mr. Gorne (Treasurer, I.L.P.); Miss Edwards (Tramway Vehicle Workers); Mrs. Smith (Tool makers). The first meeting was held on Tuesday, the 9th.

WHAT'S ON?

W.S.F. FIXTURES.

OUTDOOR.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th.
Meetings, 3 P.M. and 8 P.M. See "Great Push."
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14th.
Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.30 A.M., Mr. L. Hogben.
"The Flagstaff," Hampstead, 11.30 A.M., Mrs. Walker.
"The Flagstaff," Hampstead, 3.30 P.M., Mrs. Walker.
Finsbury Park, 3 P.M., Mrs. Bouvier.
The Square, Woolwich, 3 P.M., Ex-Inspector Syme.
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th.
Meetings, 3 P.M. and 7 P.M. See "Great Push."

INDOOR.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 15th.
Bow Women's Hall, 7.45 P.M., General Meeting (London Section).
Bow Women's Hall, 8.15 P.M., Mrs. Cedar Paul, 'Militarism and Birth Control.' Chair: Mrs. Bouvier.
Co-operative Hall, 144, Seven Sisters Road, N., 8 P.M., Miss Sylvia Pankhurst.
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 17th.
Poplar Women's Hall, 20, Railway Street, 8.15 P.M., Mrs. Cole.
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18th.
St. Stephen's Shop, 85, Hoxton Street, 8.30 P.M., Ex-Inspector Syme.
Chandos Hall, 21a, Maiden Lane, W.C., 7.30 P.M., Miss Muriel Matters, 'Montessori.' Chair: Dr. Barbara Tchaykovsky.

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th, LEYTON—(Joint with Peace Crusaders). Meet: 2.30 p.m. at 73 CALDERON ROAD, LEYTON. Secretary for the day: Mrs. HART, 73 Calderon Road, Leyton. Speakers—Mrs. BEST, Mrs. BOUVIER, Mrs. WALKER, Mr. H. G. RUSSELL. At Home, 7.30 p.m., B.S.F. HALL, 42 Forest Lane. Speaker: Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20th, KENSAL RISE—(Joint with Peace Crusaders). Meet: 10 MILMAN ROAD, WEST KILBURN, 2.45 p.m. (No. 6 Bus from Bishopsgate). Secretary for the day: Mrs. EDWARDS, 30 Clifford Gardens, N.W.10. Meetings: 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Speakers: Mrs. BEST, Mrs. BOUVIER, Mrs. WALKER, Mr. H. G. RUSSELL.

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